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ABSTRACT

In view of the complex changes going on in work and schooling in the United States, organizational innovations are necessary if both institutions are to regain their competitive edge. The nation is pulled by two value traditions: a bureaucratic, centralized control tradition versus the tradition of democratic ideals. The centralized control pressures of test score accountability have debilitating effects on teachers. Meanwhile, key segments of industry have relinquished the controls of scientific management and moved toward a participative, democratic, sociotechnical design of work. The effective Japanese model is grounded in a Japanese culture that cannot be transferred to this country. According to Zuboff, the choice facing the nation in achieving effective performance in high-tech industry is between "automating" (technology that preserves hierarchical structure and control) and "informating" (technology that produces a more abstract kind of work). According to Reich, the skills and attitudes of symbolic analysis are crucial for new work and new education. Leaders of high-tech industries recognize the need for changes in school structures and learning styles, but accept only those changes that can produce bottom-line results on national testing. Debates over science education and computer use in schools reflect the tension between automating and informating options in industry. To meet the challenges of electronic postindustrialism, workers need the skills of symbolic analysis in work and learning--a view that coincides with Zuboff's case for informating strategies. (Appendixes include chapter notes, a 73-item bibliography, and index.) (YLB)

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